

Scrutiny Annual Report 2023/24



Introduction from the Chairman of the Overview Committee.

Welcome to the scrutiny annual report. The report provides a summary of the work undertaken by Overview Committee and the three select committees during 2023/24. It details how the Council's Scrutiny function has worked to support delivery of the ambitions contained in the Nottinghamshire Plan, the Council's 10-year vision for a healthy, prosperous, and greener Nottinghamshire for everyone.

Scrutiny is an important non-political process carried out by Councillors on behalf of the residents of Nottinghamshire. Scrutiny raises standards by challenging the Council's performance and checking whether policies and services meet people's needs. 2023/24 has again been a busy year for scrutiny. During the year, 19 scrutiny committee meetings were held, and six detailed scrutiny reviews were completed. This work has played a vital role in holding decision makers to account; reviewing policies and strategies; as well as considering how the Council is delivering on its commitments to the residents of Nottinghamshire.

Throughout the year Overview Committee and the three select committees have focused on the critical issues for the Council and have provided constructive input to improve outcomes for residents. Important work carried out by scrutiny members this year has included:

- the detailed budget scrutiny that was carried out ahead of the budget and council tax being agreed by Full Council.
- carrying out a review of how the Household Waste Recycling Centre service could operate in the future.
- scrutinising the progress being made by the Nottinghamshire local area Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Partnership in implementing improvements to the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.
- examining how the Council supports carers across Nottinghamshire.
- looking at how the Council has supported residents facing pressures related to the increased cost of living.

Scrutiny at Nottinghamshire is still new, and as such our approach to scrutiny is still developing. As part of the work to consider how Council's approach to scrutiny can be further developed, and to ensure that scrutiny is providing the best possible outcomes for Nottinghamshire residents, an independent review of the operation of the Council's scrutiny function was carried out by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny. This was a member led process that took the form of a review into current arrangements and that then made a set of recommendations for improvements on how scrutiny operates at the Council. As a result of the review, Overview Committee has now set up a member working group that will be looking at how these recommendations can be used to further develop and strengthen scrutiny.

I'd like to thank all scrutiny members and co-opted members for their hard work and commitment to carrying out meaningful scrutiny in Nottinghamshire during the past year. I'd also like to thank Cabinet members and officers for attending scrutiny committee meetings and supporting the delivery of the in-depth scrutiny reviews that have taken place. The next year will be a busy one for scrutiny as scrutiny seeks to support the delivery of the ambitions of the Council, and I look forward to working with all Scrutiny members, Cabinet members and officers to deliver high quality scrutiny throughout 2024/25.

Councillor Boyd Elliott, Chairman of the Overview Committee

What is scrutiny?

Scrutiny aims to ensure that public services and policies best meet the needs of Nottinghamshire's residents. Scrutiny acts as the check and balance to the Council's Executive decision makers, the Cabinet, by contributing to policy review and development, holding the Council's Cabinet and partners to account for decisions and performance and investigating issues that matter to residents.

Who is involved?

Any Councillor who is not a member of the Cabinet can participate. Committees also have co-opted members and dedicated officer support. Cabinet Members, senior officers, and representatives of partner organisations are invited to attend meetings to discuss issues.

What kinds of things can scrutiny look at?

Councillors and Co-opted Members prioritise issues. Because of the time commitment and effort required it is not possible to look at every topic. Each select committee draws up a list of possible items it would like to consider. Overview Committee reviews this, together with its own list of selected topics, and manages the overall Work Programme, considering whether scrutiny can make a real difference by looking at an issue. It also considers the work programme of the Health Scrutiny Committee to prevent duplication of effort.

Is there anything scrutiny can't examine?

Individual complaints or regulatory decisions are not appropriate topics for scrutiny.

Is scrutiny political?

Councillors across all political groups participate, setting aside party politics to look objectively at issues, basing their findings on evidence.

What happens in Scrutiny Committee meetings?

Scrutiny committee meetings are formal and public. They provide a forum whereby councillors can:

- discuss written information they have received from the Council and external bodies.
- hear evidence from witnesses, which could include other councillors, council officers, experts, representatives from other organisations and members of the public.
- question witnesses to gain a better understanding of the issues.
- draw conclusions from their discussions and the evidence examined, in the form of an outcome.

What is the role of each Committee?

The Council's Constitution details the role of each committee in detail. The main responsibilities of each committee are:

Overview Committee

- Scrutinise and review any matter under the responsibility of the Chief Executive's Department.
- Coordinate the work of three select committees (including approving each committee's work programme) to ensure the time of select committees is used effectively and efficiently.
- Scrutinise the implementation of the Nottinghamshire Plan.
- Support Cabinet in the creation of the Council's Budget.
- Consider Call-in requests.

Adult Social Care and Public Health Select Committee

- Scrutinise and review any matter under the responsibility of the Adult Social Care and Public Health Department.

Children and Families Select Committee

- Scrutinise and review any matter under the responsibility of the Children and Families Department.

Place Select Committee

- Scrutinise and review any matter under the responsibility of the Place Department.
- Carry out the Council's statutory responsibility for flood risk management scrutiny.
- Carry out the Council's statutory responsibility for crime and disorder scrutiny.

What are Task and finish groups?

Task and finish groups are informal, usually small and time-limited bodies comprised of councillors and, often, co-optees brought in from outside the council for their specific skills and experiences. They are established by a parent committee to undertake a discrete piece of scrutiny work, and report back to that committee with their findings and recommendations.

What is Call-in?

Call-in provides a mechanism for councillors to intervene when they feel that a decision being made by the executive needs to be revisited (or possibly changed) because they do not believe the principles of decision-making have been followed. It provides a key check and balance in the leader/cabinet system of governance.

What about Health Scrutiny?

In Nottinghamshire, the Council's Statutory Healthy Scrutiny Committee that examines the delivery of externally delivered health services across the County, such as NHS dental services and access to GP's, operates independently from the Overview Committee and the three select committees. Coordination of work programmes between the committees does take place to ensure that the work of the Health Scrutiny Committee and of the other committees are aligned and not duplicated. Further information on the work of the Health Scrutiny Committee can be accessed [here](#).

Scrutiny in action



Councillors Butler, Corden, Creamer and Moxon visiting the West Bridgford HWRC as part of Place Select Committee's review of HWRCs: October 2023. (Picture credit Mick Allen).



Councillors Adams, Bailey, Callaghan, and Mrs Saddington visiting the County Enterprise Foods production facility in Worksop as part of Place Select Committee's review of the Catering and Facilities Management Service: March 2024. (Picture credit Katherine Harclerode).



Councillors Adams, Bailey and Callaghan visiting the Rainworth Distribution Centre and viewing a mobile oven used to deliver meals on wheels as part of Place Select Committee's review of the Catering and Facilities Management Service: March 2024. (Picture credit Katherine Harclerode).



Co-Chairs of the Making It Real Forum, Dean Thomas and Marion Wardill (alongside Melanie Williams – Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health) who attended a meeting of the Adult Social Care and Public Health Select Committee to discuss how the Forum provided those who access services with real opportunities to shape and change policies and practice in the delivery of Adult Social Care services: June 2024. (Picture credit Helen Neville).

The Nottinghamshire Plan

The Nottinghamshire Plan is the Council's 10-year vision for a healthy, prosperous, and greener Nottinghamshire for everyone.

This vision is supported by nine ambitions and commitments to 2025 which act as a framework for all County Council activity. These are:

- Helping our people live healthier, more independent lives.
- Supporting communities and families
- Keeping children, vulnerable adults, and communities safe.
- Building skills that help people to get good local jobs.
- Strengthening businesses and creating more good-quality jobs.
- Making Nottinghamshire somewhere people love to live, work and visit.
- Attracting investment in infrastructure, the economy, and green growth.
- Improving transport and digital connections.
- Protecting the environment and reducing our carbon footprint.

A tenth ambition "A forward-looking and resilient Council" describes the Council's ambitions and commitments in terms of internal corporate improvement.

During 2023/24 the Overview Committee reviewed the delivery of the Annual Delivery Plan and accompanying Assurance Report that detailed how the activities to deliver on the ambitions of the Nottinghamshire Plan were progressing. With the majority of actions contained within the Annual Delivery Plan and Assurance Report being 'On Track' or 'Completed', the focus of Scrutiny has been on the specific areas that were not achieving the expected levels of performance or where feedback from residents received by Members had prompted specific queries.

Throughout 2024/25 the Overview Committee will continue to review how activity across the Council is delivering on the ambitions of the Nottinghamshire Plan.

The following sections provide a summary of the work undertaken by the Overview Committee and the three select committees during 2023/24 and details how the Council's Scrutiny function has worked to support delivery of the ambitions detailed in the Nottinghamshire Plan.

Helping our people live healthier, more independent lives.

Improving the public health outcomes of Nottinghamshire residents

At the December meeting of the Adult Social Care and Public Health Select Committee, members received a report that provided information on the public health outcomes experienced by Nottinghamshire residents. At the meeting members sought to gain further information and clarification on the activities that were being carried out to improve the public health outcomes of all Nottinghamshire residents, particularly for those residents who lived in areas of higher deprivation or who had long term health conditions.

After discussing the report in detail, members were assured that the work that was required to improve the health of all residents, and in particular, of residents in the more deprived areas of Nottinghamshire had been identified as areas of priority in both the Nottinghamshire Plan as well as in the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

As a result of the discussion at the meeting, members agreed that further detailed scrutiny should be carried out by members on the outcomes and inequalities in women's and children's health, substance use (focussing on the harms of drugs and alcohol) and around the health outcomes for residents experiencing severe multiple disadvantage.

NHS Health Checks

The NHS Health Checks programme is a service paid for from the Public Health Grant and which provides health checks for adults between the age of 40 and 74. The programme is designed to improve economic and social well-being by keeping people healthier for longer. At the December meeting of the Adult Social Care and Public Health Select Committee, members received a report on the delivery of the programme across Nottinghamshire. As a result of the detailed discussion at the meeting, the committee requested that further consideration should be given on how the uptake of invitations to the NHS Health Check Programme could be increased, especially in areas of Nottinghamshire that were more deprived, and that work should be carried out to investigate digital opportunities for the delivery of the NHS Health Check Programme.

Members will be receiving a progress report on the delivery of the NHS Health Check Programme during 2024/25 when they will examine the impact of the activities that have been implemented over the past year to increase the take up of NHS Health Checks.

Mental Health Services and support provided by the Council

At the March meeting of the Adult Social Care and Public Health Select Committee members considered the range of the Council's adult mental health service offer and how this linked in with other mental health service provision across the health and care system. Whilst the key role of diagnosis and treatment of mental health conditions lies with primary and secondary healthcare, both Adult Social Care and Public Health play an important role in providing and commissioning services aimed at promoting independence, harm reduction and mental health recovery.

At the meeting members sought and gained assurance around the activity that was taking place to address the challenges of providing high quality mental health services and support to residents.

Support for Carers and the All-age Carers Strategy

At the March meeting of the Adult Social Care and Public Health Select Committee members examined how the Joint Nottingham and Nottinghamshire All-age Carers Strategy was enabling the Council to support carers across Nottinghamshire. At the meeting members also had the opportunity to hear from an un-paid carer who shared with members their experiences of being a carer and on how the strategy was delivering in providing the services and support that carers across Nottinghamshire required to enable them to be effective carers but also to feel supported themselves in providing care.

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Suicide Prevention and Self-Harm Strategy

Suicide is preventable and Nottinghamshire County Council, Nottingham City Council and local partners are working towards reducing suicide in the local population by proactively improving population mental health and wellbeing and responding to known risks for suicide in the population.

At the June meeting of the Adult Social Care and Public Health Select Committee members considered the draft Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Suicide Prevention and Self-Harm Strategy. This document had been created in order to bring together and drive activity across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire to reduce the devastating impacts of suicide and self-harm.

At the meeting, in addition to providing comments and feedback on the draft strategy members of the committee agreed that they would promote the mental health awareness, self-harm awareness, suicide prevention and suicide bereavement training that was available within their communities. Members also expressed their support for as many Councillors as possible to complete the suicide awareness training that was available.

During 2024/25 scrutiny members will be examining how the Suicide Prevention and Self-Harm Strategy has been implemented and how it is making a positive impact across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

Supporting communities and families

Cost of Living Review

At the July meeting of Overview Committee, members received a report detailing the findings of the task and finish review that had been carried out around how the Council had worked to support residents and communities across Nottinghamshire who had been impacted by increases in cost of living.

The review had recognised how the factors that had led to the recent sharp increase in the cost of living, and which continued to impact on residents had been outside of the control of the Council, with the Council having a limited ability to be able to mitigate their impact on Nottinghamshire residents. Members of the review group, throughout the process of carrying out the review, were however assured that the Council had done as much as was possible within its powers in supporting Nottinghamshire communities and residents who had been impacted by cost of living pressures.

Members of the review group agreed that the funding that had been made available to the Council from the UK Government had enabled the delivery of significant levels of support to residents and communities facing cost of living pressures that would not have been otherwise possible. Members also agreed that whilst funding had been provided by the UK Government, the decisions that had been taken by the Council about how the funding had been used to deliver the support had enabled the funding to have the maximum possible impact in supporting residents and communities across Nottinghamshire facing cost of living pressures.

The review also examined how the voluntary and community sector had played a vital role in supporting residents and how the Council had worked with these organisations to maximise the support that they were able to provide to residents and communities.

Members of the review group hope that in future there will be some further support from the UK Government that will enable the Council and the voluntary and community sector across Nottinghamshire to carry out further work to support the delivery of further impactful and robust support to residents and communities.

Review of the revised Elective Home Education Policy

Elective home education describes the choice by parents to provide education for their children at home - or at home and in some other way which they choose - instead of sending them to school full-time. In early 2024, members of the Children and Families Select Committee carried out a review of the Council's revised Elective Home Education Policy in advance of it being considered for approval by the Cabinet Member for Education and SEND. As a result of the review process members were satisfied that the revised policy ensured that the Council had clear and consistent procedures for working in partnership with parents who choose to electively home educate their children.

Members also made several recommendations on how the text of the strategy could be amended in order to make its objectives more clear. All of the recommended changes to the revised policy that had been made by members were accepted by the Cabinet Member in advance of approving the revised policy.

Childcare provision

At the February meeting of the Children and Families Select Committee, members examined how the Council was preparing to meet the new requirements that had been set out by the Government around increasing the number of funded childcare places available and extending childcare provision to support to more parents when returning to work. At the meeting members sought assurance on how the activity that was being carried out, and that had been informed by the Council's 2023 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, would enable the delivery of sufficient and sustainable childcare provision across all communities in Nottinghamshire.

During 2024/25, members of the Children and Families Select Committee will be receiving a further report to assess how the Council is ensuring that there are sufficient childcare places available across Nottinghamshire as the roll out of the requirements of the new Childcare Reforms continue.

Partnership progress in improving the experiences and outcomes for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

In early 2023 Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspected the Nottinghamshire local area to assess how effective the local education, health and care services were at identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The local area inspection highlighted significant concerns about the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND in Nottinghamshire with the members of partnership being tasked to address these concerns urgently. Nottinghamshire's SEND Partnership spans a broad range of partners, services, and stakeholders. This includes the Integrated Care Board (ICB), Healthcare Providers and education settings. Two areas of priority actions had been identified for improvement which were the timeliness of the delivery of Education Health and Care Plans and access to therapies that were predominantly, but not entirely provided by the NHS Service. A further area of improvement that had been highlighted was around governance.

At every meeting of the Children and Families Select Committee members have received reports that have detailed the progress being made by the Nottinghamshire local area Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Partnership in implementing the required improvements to the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND. These reports have enabled members of the committee to scrutinise and gain assurance on the activities that continue to be carried out to make positive changes to the experiences of young people with SEND and their families in Nottinghamshire.

During 2024/25 the Children and Families Select Committee will continue to receive progress reports on the delivery of the required improvements being made across the partnership.

Review of the provision of Education Health and Care Plans

During 2022/23 the Children and Families Select Committee agreed to prioritise a review around the provision of Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCP) within its work programme. This had been partly prompted by the findings of the Ofsted and Care Quality Commission Inspection in early 2023 that had raised significant concerns about the experience of children and young people with SEND in Nottinghamshire and highlighted Education, Health, and Care Plans as a key priority area for scrutiny. The Council had expressed deep regret at the findings of the inspection and this scrutiny review provided a timely opportunity for additional scrutiny and review of this issue.

The review made twelve recommendations on areas of EHCP service delivery around:

- ensuring the most impactful use of available resources.
- maximising the opportunities and benefits of partnership working with schools.

- increasing the number of Educational Psychologists employed by the Council.
- how parents and carers should have a clear and accessible point of contact at the Council for queries and support during the process of applying for an EHCP.

The recommendations from the review were accepted by Cabinet in December 2023. Members of the Children and Families Select Committee will be receiving a progress report in October 2024 on how the work that has been carried out in response to the review's recommendations has been supporting improvements to experiences of children and families who have requested, or already have an EHCP in place.

Secondary school place planning

During 2022/23 the Children and Families Select Committee examined how the Council was working to deliver sufficient secondary school places across Nottinghamshire. At the meeting Members agreed that for the Council to provide the required number of school places across Nottinghamshire it was essential that the processes for identifying the need for school places were fully integrated with the processes for both building new schools and expanding existing ones.

In Spring 2024 members of the Children and Families Select Committee carried out a task and finish review to examine how the Children and Families and Place departments could best work together on the projects being implemented across Nottinghamshire to deliver additional school places. The findings of the review will be considered by members at the committee's October 2024 meeting.

Joint scrutiny review of the recommissioned Healthy Families Programme

The Nottinghamshire Healthy Families Programme is a public health nursing service that supports families to provide their children with the best start in life.

On 31 March 2023 Overview Committee considered a call-in request in relation to the decision – Nottinghamshire Healthy Families Programme: 2024 and beyond that had been taken by Cabinet at its meeting on 9 March 2023. The reasons for the call-in to Overview Committee were on:

- Concerns regarding how pre-scrutiny was undertaken, meetings being held in private, and the information included within the report to Cabinet.
- Concerns related to safeguarding about the proposed delivery of the service particularly in relation to health visitors.
- Concerns regarding the approach for commissioning the Healthy Families Programme and on the consideration of alternative options for the recommissioning process.

Further details on the call-in are detailed in the 2022/23 Scrutiny Annual Report.

As a result of the call-in process Cabinet requested that Overview Committee carry out a joint scrutiny review with members of the Adult Social Care Select Committee, the Children and Families Select Committee and the Health Scrutiny Committee around what the recommissioned Healthy Families Programme from 2024 would look like. The review was carried out in Autumn 2023.

The key considerations that guided the work of the review included:

- The impact of the newly recommissioned service on outcomes for children and families (including how the service design will support the Best Start strategy objectives).
- The flexibility within the contract to facilitate continual transformation and alignment with the Council's Early Help offer.

- How the engagement that had been carried out with stakeholders, children and families has been used to shape how the service will be delivered.
- How the Council's ambition for place-based working and partnership working with relevant services to support children's outcomes would be supported by the delivery of the recommissioned Healthy Families Programme.

As a result of the detailed review process that took place, 10 recommendations in total were made around areas of service delivery and development including:

- supporting the addition of a Healthy Families Service visit for first time parents when their child is 3 - 4 months old in the new service delivery model.
- performance monitoring of the recommissioned service and performance monitoring by scrutiny members.
- the integration of the provision of the Healthy Families Programme with the delivery of (Children's Centres and the Early Help offer and Family Hubs), to provide a joined up and responsive service for children and families across Nottinghamshire.

The recommendations from the review were endorsed by Overview Committee in January 2024, in advance of them being considered and accepted in full by Cabinet in March 2024. Throughout 2024/25, scrutiny members will be receiving further reports on the work that is taking place around the current activity and continuing work that is taking place around the recommissioning of the service.

Special Educational Needs and Disability provision and sufficiency

In July 2024 the Children and Families Select Committee examined how children and young people are being supported across Nottinghamshire to remain in mainstream education settings. Members also considered the work that was taking place around the sufficiency of and planning for specialist educational provision that was being carried out to meet current and future demand for specialist educational provision in Nottinghamshire.

Keeping children, vulnerable adults, and communities safe

Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report

The Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) provides the arrangements under which safeguarding partners and relevant agencies work together to coordinate safeguarding services across Nottinghamshire.

In October members of the Children and Families Select Committee received the NSCP's annual report for 2022/23. Information was also provided on the work that was being carried to deliver on its current areas of priority. The committee took this opportunity to examine how the NSCP was fulfilling its duties and how the NSCP was coordinating the multi-agency arrangements that were in place to deliver effective safeguarding activity that would protect children and young people across Nottinghamshire. After an in-depth and detailed discussion, members were assured that the NSCP was fulfilling its duties but sought further information and assurance around:

- the work that was being carried out across the partnership to target groups identified as more vulnerable to criminal and sexual exploitation.
- how the partnership would work to achieve its aim of lowering numbers of protection plans whilst maintaining effective safeguarding.

From the further information that was provided members gained the assurance that focussed and impactful activity was being carried out in these important areas of the partnership's work.

The Children and Families Select Committee will continue the important work of scrutinising safeguarding activity for children and young people when it receives the 2023/24 NSCP annual report at its October 2024 meeting.

Nottinghamshire Adults Safeguarding Board Annual Report and Plan

The Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Adults Board (NSAB) is made up of representatives from organisations including, Nottinghamshire Police, the Crown Prosecution Service, the NHS, local councils, and voluntary organisations. Its main responsibility is to get these organisations working together to help adults who may have been abused and to help prevent adults being abused.

In December the Adult Social Care and Public Health Select Committee received the NSAB annual report for 2022/23 and took the opportunity to discuss with the Independent Chair how the NSAB was working to deliver on its strategic priorities. After an in-depth and varied discussion members were confident that the NSAB was effectively delivering adult safeguarding but sought further assurance that activity was taking place that would raise public awareness on how to report their concerns about abuse. Members of the committee welcomed how the Board was delivering its communications strategy that aimed to highlight how family members, carers and people in the wider community could report any concerns.

The Adult Social Care and Public Health Select Committee will continue the important work of scrutinising safeguarding activity for adults when it receives the 2023/24 NSAB annual report.

Crime and Disorder - Safer Nottinghamshire Board

Legislation requires that Councils appoint a Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee that must meet at least once a year to look at crime and disorder issues. In Nottinghamshire the Place Select Committee carries out this role.

At the September and March meetings of the Place Select Committee, members examined the development and implementation of the Safer Nottinghamshire Board's crime and disorder strategy, the Nottinghamshire Community Safety Agreement 2023-2025.

The Place Select Committee will continue to scrutinise the delivery of the current Nottinghamshire Community Safety Agreement during 2024/25.

Sufficiency Strategy for Looked After Children and Care Leavers

At its April meeting the Children and Families Select Committee examined the activity that the Council was carrying out to support the delivery of Nottinghamshire's ambition that more looked after children and young people are able to live in family-based placements, close to home.

At the meeting members learnt that compared with national averages and its statistical neighbours, Nottinghamshire had fewer children in foster placements and a higher proportion in residential children's homes and semi-independent supported accommodation placements suitable for some young people over the age of 16. Members agreed that where possible looked after children should be living in family based placements. Members welcomed the launch of "Foster for East Midlands" where Derbyshire County Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Nottingham City Council, and Derby City Council have partnered to launch a new regional approach to Fostering and how this would support activity to increase the number of available foster carers across the four local authorities.

In Autumn 2024, to further support the work that is already taking place around increasing availability of family based placements, members of the Children and Families Select Committee will be

carrying out a task and finish review to consider what further activity can be carried out to support the ongoing work around the recruitment and retention of foster carers.

Youth Justice Plan

The Nottinghamshire Youth Justice Plan sets out how Youth Justice Services are delivered in Nottinghamshire. In July 2023 the Children and Families Select Committee examined current priorities of the Youth Justice Plan and the progress being made in its implementation.

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

The MASH is the county's first point of contact for new safeguarding referrals and enables efficient sharing of information between agencies, helping to protect the most vulnerable children and adults from harm, neglect, and abuse.

In April 2024, the Children and Families Select Committee examined the work that was being carried out to further develop how the MASH operated and that would enable more children to access the right early help support through signposting, early help services, or timely access to social work assessment and support.

During 2024/25 the Children and Families Select Committee will be receiving a progress report on the activities that have been taking place to further develop the delivery of the MASH.

Building skills that help people to get good local jobs

Strengthening businesses and creating more good-quality jobs

Secondary school place planning

Members of the Children's and Families Select Committee are currently carrying out a review around secondary school place planning to examine how the Children and Families and Place departments can best work together on projects being implemented across Nottinghamshire to meet the need for, and to deliver additional school places.

The review group will be reporting its findings at the September 2024 meeting of the Children and Families Select Committee in advance of them being submitted to Cabinet for their consideration.

Support for former Wilko staff in Nottinghamshire.

Employment and skills are a key ambition of the Nottinghamshire Plan, including actions that are focused on building the skills that help people get and sustain good jobs. At the March 2024 meeting, Overview Committee received a report that detailed the work that had been carried out by the Council, in partnership with the district and borough councils in supporting the Wilko employees who had been affected by the closure of the retailer in Autumn 2023.

Employment and Skills Framework

The Council is currently creating an Employment and Skills Framework that will set out how the Council will help residents to get more job ready, develop their skills and support them to access the training that will support them to get good quality jobs. In Autumn 2024, as part of the development of the Framework, scrutiny members will have the opportunity to learn more about the objectives of the Framework and to make suggestions on its contents and focus before the final document is considered for approval by the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Asset Management.

Making Nottinghamshire somewhere people love to live, work and visit.

Culture, Learning and Libraries – Inspire: Development Plan 2024/2025

In December Place Select Committee considered a report that detailed the development of Inspire in its delivery of cultural, learning and library services across Nottinghamshire and its plans for 2024/25.

At the meeting members agreed that Inspire delivered an excellent library service across Nottinghamshire and were impressed with Inspire's high quality libraries as well as the extensive range of inclusive activities that it delivered which went over and above the level of service that Inspire was required to provide. Members also welcomed how the Council was committed to delivering a high quality library service, and that unlike many other local authorities, had not closed libraries.

Place Select Committee members are looking forward receiving a further progress report from Inspire during 2024/25 where they will further examine Inspire delivering cultural, learning and library services to Nottinghamshire residents.

Visitor Economy Framework

In January 2023 members of the Place Select Committee examined in detail the Council's refreshed Visitor Economy Framework in advance of it being considered for approval by the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Asset Management. As a result of these considerations, members agreed that the Visitor Economy Framework clearly set out the steps that the County Council would take to enable the Visitor Economy in Nottinghamshire to thrive and recover from the impact of the pandemic. Members also took this opportunity to highlight several areas of focus that should be considered the creation of the action plan which would drive forward the delivery of Visitor Economy Framework

At the May 2024 meeting members of the Place Select Committee considered a report that detailed the work that the Council and its partners had undertaken in delivering the objectives of the Visitor Economy Framework during its first year of implementation. Members welcomed the activity that was taking place to increase the amount and variety of visitor accommodation in Nottinghamshire which would enable visitors to make longer visits as well as the activities that would maximise the opportunities related to elite spectator sport.

Attracting investment in infrastructure, the economy, and green growth

Electric Vehicle Charging

At the December meeting of Place Select Committee, members received a progress report on the delivery of Nottinghamshire's Highway Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Infrastructure Programme and Electric Vehicle Cable Channel (EVCC) pilot project which would support eligible households without off-street parking to be able to charge their Electric Vehicle on-street.

The Place Select Committee will be receiving a further report during 2024/25 to examine how the development of EV charging infrastructure across Nottinghamshire is progressing.

Arc Partnership – Proposed contract extension

Arc Partnership delivers multi-disciplinary property design, consultancy, master planning, regeneration, project/programme management, emergency, reactive, compliance asset management and planned services on behalf of the Council and the communities and people it represents.

At the July 2024 meeting of the Overview Committee, members considered proposals for the Council to extend its contract with the Arc Partnership for an additional five years to 2031 in advance of the final decision being taken by the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Asset Management.

At the meeting members had the opportunity to discuss and comment on the issues around the proposed contract extension. These comments will now be considered by the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Asset Management in advance of making their final decision on the proposed contract extension.

Improving transport and digital connections

Highways

In May 2021 a cross party Highways review panel was established to review all aspects of highways management in Nottinghamshire. In December 2023 the Place Select Committee examined how the recommendations that had arisen from the review were being delivered and how they were supporting continued improvements to Nottinghamshire's roads. The report also provided an update on highway activities that had recently been undertaken.

Place Select Committee will be receiving a further report at its December 2024 meeting where members will have the opportunity to scrutinise and monitor the continuing impact of the recommendations in improving Nottinghamshire's roads.

Via East Midlands – Proposed contract extension

At the July 2024 meeting of the Overview Committee, members considered proposals for the Council to extend its contract with Via East Midlands Ltd for a further five years for the delivery of in-house delivery of highways and transportation maintenance services.

At the meeting members had the opportunity to discuss and comment on the issues around the proposed contract extension. These comments will now be considered by the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment in advance of making their final decision on the proposed contract extension.

Residents' Parking Schemes

At the March meeting of the Place Select Committee, members considered a report on the current policy and processes that supported the introduction and modification of Residents' Parking Schemes in Nottinghamshire.

As a result of the discussion at the meeting, members agreed that this issue would benefit from further detailed scrutiny work being undertaken through the establishment of a task and finish group that would enable members to fully consider in detail a range of possible amendments around the processes that supported the planning and implementation of residents' parking schemes. The findings of the review will be considered by Place Select Committee during Autumn 2024.

Protecting the environment and reducing our carbon footprint

Climate Change

In May 2021 Nottinghamshire County Council declared a Climate Emergency.

At the March meeting of Overview Committee members examined the activity that had been carried out by the Council in responding to the challenges of climate change since the declaration had been made and which would support the Council's ambition to become carbon neutral in all of its activities by 2030. As part of their considerations, members also examined the Council's Carbon Reduction

Plan that set out the framework for activity on how the Council's greenhouse gas emissions are measured and reported in pursuit of the 2030 net zero ambition.

As part of the wide ranging and in-depth discussion on the Council's activity to address the challenges of Climate Change, members welcomed the activity that was being carried out to build upon the success of the full implementation of LED streetlighting across Nottinghamshire with the work that was being carried out to look at the possibilities around transitioning to LED road signage.

During 2024/25 Overview Committee will continue to scrutinise the Council's activity and the progress being made towards reaching its ambition to become carbon neutral by 2030.

Net Zero Framework

Since announcing a climate emergency in May 2021, the Council has been committed to reducing carbon emissions across its assets and business activities. These reductions will help the Council in achieving its 2030 carbon neutral target and achieving, in line with the national target, Net Zero by 2050.

As part of the work being carried out across the Council around working towards Net Zero, members of the Overview Committee had the opportunity to feed into the development of the Council's Net Zero Framework at the March meeting. The Net Zero Framework is a high-level, strategic document that outlines the Council's ambitions for achieving net zero across Nottinghamshire and lays the foundations for the required actions for achieving the Council's net zero ambitions. The comments made by members during consideration of the draft Net Zero Framework were taken forward in the preparation of the document's final draft.

Members of the Overview Committee will be receiving a progress report on the delivery and initial impact of the Net-Zero Framework during 2024/25.

Flood Risk Management

As part of its statutory role to scrutinise flood risk management activity, Place Select Committee considers the Section 19 reports that have been compiled by the Council (as the lead local flood authority) in response several flooding events. During 2023/24 Place Select Committee received the reports on the flooding that had taken place in Ravenshead in April 2023, Eastwood in September 2023 as well as on the exceptional and widespread flooding that had been experienced across Nottinghamshire during Storm Babet in October 2023 and Storm Henk in January 2024.

Members of the committee were unanimous in expressing their thanks to the officers and teams who had been involved in supporting residents and communities that had been impacted by these exceptional flooding events. Members also welcomed how the Council was working with volunteer groups to enhance flood resilience within communities.

Members of Place Select Committee are currently carrying out a detailed task and finish review around flooding that will:

- review the Council's preparation for and response to the flooding caused by Storm Babet.
- seek assurances that the County Council, as Lead Flooding Authority for Nottinghamshire, takes the strongest possible approach to improving flood resilience across Nottinghamshire.
- examine how County Council services are working to lessen the devastating effects of future floods by coordinating the efforts of partners, communities, and stakeholders to prepare well for inevitable floods and respond effectively to future flooding events.

The findings of this review will be received by Place Select Committee in Autumn 2024 in advance of them being submitted to Cabinet for consideration.

Household Waste Recycling Centres

In January 2022, the Transport and Environment Committee gave approval for a Strategic Review of the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) network to be carried out to ensure that individual HWRC sites, as well as the wider network were fit for the future. At the July 2023 meeting of the Place Select Committee members considered a report that detailed the work that had been carried out so far by the review. As the recommendations that had so far been identified by the review still required additional analysis and evaluation to fully understand their impact to the HWRC network, members of the Place Select Committee agreed to carry out a detailed piece of scrutiny work to consider the findings of the review and to consider what the provision of HWRCs across Nottinghamshire could look like in the future.

As part of the review process, members of the review group carried out site visits to six HWRCs. These site visits provided members with the opportunity to view a representative range of sites that made up the HWRC network and enabled them to gain a thorough understanding of the benefits, limitations, and operational issues of each site as well as of the wider HWRC network.

The review group having considered the operational constraints, site efficiency, and the potential and scope for improvement of the existing HWRC network, recommended that a reconfiguration of the HWRC network should be carried out as the network in its current form did not provide the best possible level of customer service to residents.

Other recommendations that came from the review included:

- That further work should be carried out to gain an understanding of potential benefits of introducing Automatic Number Plate Recognition and other technological solutions to maximise the experience of residents using HWRCs.
- That any changes to the HWRC network should be supported with large scale engagement and communication with the district and borough councils and with residents.

The recommendations from the review were approved at the March meeting of the Place Select Committee. A full response to the recommendations was received from the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment at the July 2024 meeting of Cabinet where all the recommendations from the review were accepted. During 2024/25 the Place Select Committee will be considering the activity that is taking place to ensure that Nottinghamshire's HWRCs continue to provide the best level of service to residents into the future.

A forward looking and resilient council

Council-wide Transformation and Change activity.

At the May meeting of Overview Committee, members received a progress report on the delivery of the Council-wide transformation and change activity that was supporting the Council's future financial resilience and sustainability.

Members welcomed how prevention was central to the work being carried out in transforming how services to residents and communities were delivered. Members agreed that this long term approach would not only provide better outcomes for residents, but also protect the delivery of valuable services by enabling the Council to use its resources in the most impactful way.

During 2024/25 the transformation and change activity that is taking place to ensure that the Council can continue to deliver high quality services to residents whilst also ensuring it continues to be being financially stable will be a key area of focus for all scrutiny members when examining how services are being delivered both now and into the future.

Catering and Facilities Management Service

The Catering and Facilities Management Service delivers a wide range of high-quality services to Nottinghamshire residents, including schools catering, meals on wheels, building cleaning and landscape maintenance.

At the December meeting, Place Select Committee received a report that detailed the challenges that were currently being experienced by the Council in the delivery of this important service. The Service has been facing significant financial pressures over a number of years with expenditure being expected to exceed income by approximately £2.5 million in 2023/24. Members agreed that a detailed task and finish review should be carried out to enable members to fully consider the issues involved and to examine how the Service could be delivered sustainably into the future.

The in-depth review was carried out over four meetings. The review also included site visits to the production centre at Worksop, the distribution facility at Rainworth and to King Edwin Primary School in Edwinstowe where members had the opportunity to see a lunchtime service and to meet onsite catering staff.

Throughout the review, members noted the significant social value that was provided through the delivery of Catering and Facilities Management Services and recognised and acknowledged the high level of service that the services 1,900 staff provided to Nottinghamshire residents.

From the work carried out during review, where a range of possible service delivery options were considered, members agreed that the option of forming a partnership with another service provider through a Joint Venture should be explored in detail. Members agreed that this option had the potential to enable the Council to sustainably deliver a high quality catering and facilities management services as well as having the minimum impact on staff. Other recommendations from the review included:

- That any future changes to the delivery of the Catering and Facilities Management Service should enable the significant potential of County Enterprise Foods to be fully realised and developed.
- That a strategic review of the 15 landscapes depots should be carried out to identify how they could be best used as part of the service's operational estate.

The recommendations from the review were approved at the May meeting of the Place Select Committee. A full response to the recommendations was received from the Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Health at the July 2024 meeting of Cabinet where all the recommendations from the review were accepted. During 2024/25 the Place Select Committee will be scrutinising work that will be taking place around how catering and facilities management services will be delivered in the future.

Budget scrutiny

Budget development and budget monitoring

Overview and scrutiny is an integral part of the council's governance and decision-making structure, contributing to the council's budgetary and policy making function as well as enabling members to hold the executive to account.

At the November 2023 meeting, Overview Committee received a report that provided an update on the current budget position for 2023/24 as well as outlining the processes for developing the budget for 2024/25 and the related budget consultation with residents.

The Overview Committee then undertook detailed scrutiny of the Council's budget position in January 2024 ahead of the formal budget and council tax setting by Full Council in February 2024.

At this meeting members had the opportunity to highlight specific areas for consideration by Cabinet as part of the budget setting process.

At this meeting members examined how:

- all the risks that could potentially impact on the delivery of the budget had been fully understood and mitigated for.
- robust processes were in place to implement and monitor the transformational activity that would enable the delivery of both the current as well as future budgets.
- the Council had good levels of financial reserves and how these were being managed effectively.
- the consultation with residents on the proposed budget had been carried out effectively and that the responses received had been considered in its preparation.
- the proposed Budget would support the delivery of the objectives as detailed in the Nottinghamshire Plan 2021-31.

Throughout the year, Overview Committee also considered Budget Monitoring reports which have enabled members to examine how the 2023/24 Budget was being delivered.

During 2024/25 Overview Committee will continue its important role of contributing to the development of the Council's budget. The committee will also continue to scrutinise budget activity to ensure that future budgets are robust, sustainable, and deliver high quality services to Nottinghamshire residents, supporting the delivery of the ambitions of the Nottinghamshire Plan.

Budget Survey 2023

During 2022/23, members of the Overview Committee carried out a detailed review of the Council's consultation and resident engagement activity where a specific area of focus had been the delivery of the Council's annual budget survey with residents. As a result of the review, several recommendations were made on the delivery of the annual budget survey and the activities that were being carried out to encourage residents to participate in this important process .

At the May 2024 meeting of the Overview Committee members received a report on the delivery of the most recent budget survey and on how the recommendations that had been made during the scrutiny review had been used to support its delivery. Members of the committee were pleased to see how the 2023 survey had received more responses from residents than any previous survey and welcomed how the review's recommendations had been put into action in its delivery.

During 2024/25 Overview Committee will be examining the continuing work that aims to further increase resident engagement and participation in the budget survey.

Children and Families Department Performance

At each meeting, members of the Children and Families Select Committee receive a report that details the financial position of the Children and Families department, it's performance against the ambitions of the Annual Delivery Plan and a summary of the department's key risks to performance and delivery. As well as providing members with the opportunity to ask questions around specific areas of service delivery, members of the committee have also from these reports highlighted further areas of service delivery that would benefit from detailed scrutiny activity.

Adult Social Care and Public Health Performance

At each meeting, members of the Adult Social Care and Public Health Select Committee receive reports that detail the financial position of the Adult Social Care and Public Health departments, their

performance against the ambitions of the Annual Delivery Plan and a summary of each department's key risks to performance and delivery. In their consideration of these reports, members have been able to ask questions around specific areas of service delivery that were not achieving the expected levels of performance and to gain assurance around the activities that were in place to improve performance in these areas.

Call-in

Call-in is an important mechanism for Councillors to intervene when they feel that a decision being made by the Executive needs to be revisited due to a perceived procedural error. During 2023/24 there were no call-ins.

The year ahead

Overview and scrutiny is an integral part of the Council's governance and decision-making structure, contributing to the Council's budgetary and policy making function as well as holding the executive to account. This report has provided an opportunity to reflect on the experiences of the last year and to recognise the challenges and opportunities that are ahead.

The next few years will continue to be challenging for the Council, operating as it does in an environment of diminishing resources and increasing demand for services. As such, it is important that scrutiny focuses on activity where it can support the Council to make the best use of the resources available and in ensuring that frontline services are still delivered to the highest possible standards. As part of the further development of scrutiny at the Council, committee work programmes will continue to be focussed and directed towards the key issues that face both the Council and Nottinghamshire residents.

Throughout 2024/25:

the **Overview Committee** will:

- continue to review how activity across the Council is delivering on the ambitions of the Nottinghamshire Plan.
- be involved in the development of the Councils budget for 2025/26.
- carry out detailed scrutiny of the Council's budget proposals ahead of the formal budget and council tax setting by Council in February 2025.

the **Adult Social Care and Public Health Select Committee** will:

- be focussed on activities that support the continued delivery and development of high quality adult care services.
- examine the activities that are being taken to improve public the health of residents.
- examine how technology is being used and developed to support the delivery of Adult Care services.

the **Children and Families Select Committee** will:

- be focussed on activities that support families and that provide children and young people with the best start in life.
- carry out a task and finish review on how the Council can recruit and retain more foster carers.

the **Place Select Committee** will:

- be focused on activities that will make Nottinghamshire cleaner, greener and that will provide good quality roads and transport infrastructure.
- examine how the Arc Partnership, Via East Midlands and Inspire deliver social value outcomes across Nottinghamshire.

Issues scrutinised by each committee during 2023/24

Overview Committee

- Budget Monitoring Process and Budget Framework
- Budget 2024/25 Development
- Budget 2024/25
- Nottinghamshire Plan Performance Monitoring
- Nottinghamshire Plan – Annual Delivery Plan
- Outcomes of the scrutiny review of the recommissioned Healthy Families Programme
- Net Zero Framework
- Climate Change
- Council Transformation and Change activity
- Support for ex-Wilko staff
- Outcomes of the scrutiny review of Cost of Living
- Council contract extensions for Via and the Arc Partnership

Adult Social Care & Public Health Select Committee

- The Social Care Market
- NHS Health Checks
- Adult Social Care and Public Health - Performance, Finance and Risk monitoring
- Nottinghamshire Adults Safeguarding Board Annual Report 2022/23 and Plan
- Public Health Outcome Framework Indicators
- Discharge to Assess
- Mental Health Services and support within Adult Social Care and Public Health
- All-Age Carers Strategy
- Support for Carers
- Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Suicide Prevention and Self-Harm Strategy

Children and Families Select Committee

- Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership – Progress Report on Priorities and Annual Report 2022/23
- Outcomes and Experiences of Children and Young People with SEND
- Outcomes of the scrutiny review of Education, Health, and Care Plans
- Provision of Support to Looked After Children Transitioning Out of the Care System
- Early Years – Provision of Childcare
- Children and Families - Adult Social Care and Public Health - Performance, Finance and Risk monitoring
- Outcomes of the scrutiny review of the revised Elective Home Education policy
- Sufficiency Strategy for Looked After Children and Care Leavers
- Developing the approach to meeting children's needs through the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
- SEND Provision and Sufficiency
- Youth Justice Plan

Place Select Committee

- Safer Nottinghamshire Board - Nottinghamshire Community Safety Agreement 2023-2025
- Outcomes of the scrutiny review of Household Waste Recycling Centres
- Recycling
- Outcomes of the scrutiny review of the Catering and Facilities Management Service.
- Highways Joint Continuous Improvement Plan – Progress Report
- Electrical Vehicle Charging
- Annual Library Plan/Strategy
- Outcomes of the scrutiny review of the Catering and Facilities Management Service
- Resident Parking Schemes
- Section 19 Report – Ravenshead Flooding
- Section 19 Reports – October 2023 Flooding
- Section 19 Reports – January 2023 Flooding
- Visitor Economy Framework
- Flooding mitigation

Scrutiny Minutes

Overview Committee

[Thursday 7 September 2023](#)

[Thursday 23 November 2023](#)

[Thursday 25 January 2024](#)

[Thursday 14 March 2024](#)

[Thursday 9 May 2024](#)

[Monday 22 July 2024](#)

Adult Social Care and Public Health Select Committee

[Monday 11 September 2023](#)

[Monday 4 December 2023](#)

[Monday 4 March 2024](#)

[Monday 3 June 2024](#)

Children and Families Select Committee

[Monday 16 October 2023](#)

[Monday 5 February 2024](#)

[Monday 15 April 2024](#)

[Monday 15 July 2024](#)

Place Select Committee

[Wednesday 20 September 2023](#)

[Wednesday 20 December 2023](#)

[Wednesday 27 March 2024](#)

[Wednesday 22 May 2024](#)

[Monday 22 July 2024](#)